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## THE EDITOR'S DIARY.

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May 30th: Memorial Day.

TIME has evolved two great typical republics, one Christian, one Pagan—America and Rome, the living and the dead. History records in letters of blood the struggles of both as Nations. Temperament and custom united in fixing their respective modes of glorifying their heroic sons. How striking the contrast—how significant of the marvellous change wrought by God in the uplifting of His people during the centuries that have passed!

To the eye of the mind of one standing over the splendid plaza, now buried in ruin, to which the Roman conquerors were wont to return in triumph from their successful wars, the picture is complete, magnificent: the conqueror riding in state, the captured generals chained to his chariot wheels and dragged stumbling and bleeding over the cruel pavement; following, the victorious legions laden with spoils, banners flying, trumpets sounding, amid the wild plaudits of a ravenous multitude. One can almost hear the shrieks of joy, the barbaric shouts of delight, over trophies won by Roman arms from weaker peoples. One can imagine the scenes of revelry following the frightful contests between captured gladiators and the hundreds of wild beasts engaged in caverns through which one still shudderingly wanders, the remorseless turning of thumbs to demand the death of the athletes who were forced to give their lives to make a holiday for the turbulent populace, the orgies of drink and lust that ensued till day broke and the hundreds of thousands sank into sleep from sheer exhaustion.

Such were the tributes paid by the Pagan republic to conquerors in war—grand, impressive, inspiring in the only sense then known of men! But whose was the glory, whose the victory, whose the reward? Was ever a monument builded in the Eternal

City to the countless thousands who fought and won the battles? No. Their compensation was a meagre portion of the spoils. Was ever a wreath of flowers placed reverently upon the grave of a common soldier in token of appreciation of the sacrifice he had made of self and loved ones? No. The pæans were for the General. The victory was his. The revelry was for him and for the heedless, heartless mob, gorgeous in seeming, but sordid and wretched and shameful in reality!

Contrast such a spectacle with the touching scenes beheld this day in America's peaceful cemeteries. There are no celebrations of a war of conquest, no rejoicing over the spoliation of defenceless men, women and children, no placing of laurel upon the brow, in the flesh or in graven stone, of an insatiable conqueror, no clanking of chains upon the ankles of the vanquished chiefs. Rather comes to our memory the beautiful episode at Appomattox, and we can almost see the gentle Grant placing back in the hands of his defeated opponent the precious sword which the knightly Lee had surrendered that no more lives should be sacrificed needlessly. But dear as is the recollection of our great generals, to-day's flowers are not for them alone; they are also for the Christian soldiers of the Christian Republic, the earnest men and youths who went forth, not in joy of opportunity, but in sadness of heart, responding to duty's demand that they offer their lives so that we as a Nation might continue united and therefore free.

If ever devotion to country was pure and undefiled, such was the patriotism of '61 no less than of '76. Never was there so great a war as ours; never one so noble. It was an army of volunteers from the North; it was an army of volunteers from the South. Neither fought for hire. Those from the North believed they were in the right, and so they were, as all now admit; but let us never forget that those from the South also thought they were in the right—and the many have paid in full the stupendous penalty of the frightful error of a few.

Some of the men from the North fought to save the Union, some to break the shackles of slavery, some doubtless were animated by prejudice and sectional spirit. But underneath all was an impulse more vital than any or all of these. It was in no true sense revolt against restrictions imposed by technical statutes. It was not opposed to the Anglo-Saxon theory that liberty must

be "under the law." It was a new interpretation of freedom—not the partial freedom of popular government, but the complete freedom which forbids the subordination of conscience to any other impelling force, whether of law or of passion. And its embodiment in the heart of our theory of government was essential to the maintenance of American institutions. The cost could not be reckoned then, can only be estimated now; but, however colossal the cost, who would venture to doubt that the result achieved was infinitely greater, and that never since could the price paid have been so small in men or money. In the only possible manner, by force of arms, the problem was solved, the question settled for all time. No longer need a Webster cry out for "Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable." That condition we have; and no man North or South now would have it otherwise. Whatever be our future problems, our future trials, we have at least the advantage and the satisfaction of facing them resolutely as a truly united people—united not in name alone, but in heart and purpose and determination to prove the wisdom of God in setting up in this new nation, as an example for all the world, "a government of, for and by the people."

But to what end were the momentous sacrifices of the civil war if we of to-day fail to bear the ark of the covenant of human liberty safely to those of to-morrow? Let us, then, consider thoughtfully, patiently, tolerantly one another's opinions regarding conditions of to-day so pregnant with possibilities of progress or retrogression, even perhaps of success or failure. The magnitude of the task now confronting the citizens of the Republic is hardly more comprehensible to the human mind than the idea of eternity itself. When Washington took command of the American troops the entire population numbered three millions; when Lincoln called for volunteers, thirty-one millions; to-day, ninety millions and nine millions of dependents. Another half-century and more than two hundred millions of human beings will be gathered under the Stars and Stripes on this continent alone. If the next fifty years pass in peace, leaving undisturbed the rights of people to govern themselves in the communities in which they live, who can doubt that the problem of the everlasting future will have been solved, and that in very truth the millennial state of the whole human race will have begun to be realized upon the

hemisphere which already, in a few hundred years, has given to man a fuller and freer opportunity to become worthy of the image in which he was created than had been afforded previously in sixty centuries?

Inevitably clouds gather as the power and responsibility of a Nation increase, and it is idle to deny that at this moment thoughtful men view with no little apprehension the growth of certain popular impulses which tend towards uncertainty and instability. Unrecognized socialism, disguised in pleasing garb, has become for the time a stumbling-block in the path of that marvellous progress so far achieved by that combination of individualism and bold initiative which we proudly term the American spirit. Much yet remains to be done to meet the requirements of National conditions already greatly changed and likely to vary with increasing rapidity as our numbers multiply by leaps and bounds. The Nation is welded politically, but not commercially and financially, as soon it must be more firmly if we would fitly fulfil our destiny. The problem is more difficult, more complicated, to-day than ever before. Adjustment of the delicate relationship of local government to National authority at their multifarious points of contact was comparatively easy when communities were segregated by retarded communication. Not so now! Every day makes fresh demand upon the ingenuity of the makers and interpreters of our law to keep true the balance which constitutes the basis of our republican theory. Nearly every modern invention tends to annihilate space and so to knit the masses more and more closely together, and render them more and more interdependent. How would those men who, we have been taught, were endowed with exceptional sagacity, the Fathers of the Republic, meet the situation if alive to-day? We cannot believe that they would insist upon rigid adherence to methods once sufficient but now become inadequate. They were not narrow minds. They saw far and clearly—so far and so clearly that when they created a constitution they built it upon a principle that compels the making of haste slowly when an eager people might perchance try to do in a month what, history teaches, years are required to accomplish. Can we do more wisely than abide by the dictates of that foresight of the Fathers which thus far has never failed, and, in making necessary changes, move cautiously and sagely as may be along the new and unbeaten paths?

History is chiefly a record of battle. Must it forever be? Can it be that God means that His children shall continue to tear at each other's throats to the end of time? Is peace really unattainable? Is it not worth even striving for? And to what Nation, if not to ours, falls the opportunity by precept and example of pointing the way? The strength of a country is not measured by armies and navies. Intelligence, character, conscience constitute the true and impregnable bulwarks of national welfare. The schoolhouse at the corner is more potent ultimately than the "Dreadnought" of the seas; the little church on the hill is worth a score of regiments. Success in agriculture, commerce and manufacture presages certain triumph in war if the cause be just. During the scores of years when foreign peoples looked covetously upon our rich inheritance and realized the apparent weakness of possible resistance, none ventured to land upon these shores. Is it likely that one would do so now when we are stronger in ultimate resources than any one or two or three foreign Powers? Is it conceivable that in these days of enlightenment a ruler, much less a people, would invite the overwhelming reprisal which would surely ensue from an unwarranted attack upon or even temporary victory over any portion of territory shielded by our flag? Modern warfare, whether in trade or with guns, is the battle of gold. So long as we have money and keep our cause just, so long will we have peace. We need no mighty fleets, no great armies—only schools and churches, as of old, for the uplifting of oppressed human beings seeking the shelter of freedom. Such, the Fathers of the Republic and our fathers believed, was the true and holy mission of this new people under the protection of the Pilgrims' God! Let us not now be led astray in pursuit of idols which are steadily sapping the life-blood of every other Nation of the world. Rather let us continue steadfast in the purposes, the ideals, the faith of our ancestors, and to ourselves at least be true.

It seems incredible that nearly half a century has glided by since the untrained soldiers of the great war gave to their country not only themselves, but the peace and happiness of those whom, left in sorrow and apprehension at home, they loved better than themselves. Through the mist of years we behold the vision of that dread time. We feel the tense apprehension that preceded the bolt. We breathe the atmosphere of foreboding that dimmed

the light of eyes and veiled with gloom the countenances which so long had shone with the happiness of personal liberty and common prosperity. From the enveloping clouds we see the lightning flash, and hear the thunder echo from Sumter to every nook and corner of the land. No need to interpret the shock! In remote communities, no less clearly than in the capitals and cities, the message was understood. It was death for the individual or death for the Nation. And how splendid the response! We see the grim determination stamped upon the faces of those who awaited impatiently the word of their great chief. We note the eagerness in their eyes, the clenching of their hands, reflecting not the lust of battle, but the love of country.

Before our retrospective vision picture after picture appears to complete the panorama. We are cognizant of the bustle of preparation; the hasty grouping of individuals into tentative organizations; we now hear the drum and bugle; excitement and confusion are welcomed to assuage grief; but the hour of parting is inevitable and comes all too soon. How many veterans recall that saddest moment in life when, with choking throats, they tried in vain to say good-by, and, turning, took a last look at the weeping wives and daughters, and the dry-eyed, bravely smiling mothers striving with all the courage of a reticent race to fill the hearts of their departing loved ones with strength and hope, and conceal the bleeding of their own. What knew these men, or what can any men know, of heroism? Deeds are but natural consequences of circumstance, environment, necessity. Suffering springs from helpless waiting. All that the great armies of men did in that awful war would weigh but as a feather in the balance against the anguish of those left behind to hope and fear and constant dread. Could the graves of all who gave their lives or happiness to their Nation be decorated this day, how many more would be those of America's noble women! But no! The wife's sacrifice is too great to find requital; the mother's love is sacred to her own. The freshest of flowers betokening our most grateful recognition would wither and die beneath the smiles of Heaven bestowed as rays of sunshine upon those tender memories.

All honor, then, to the veterans of the great war who still live; and to those who have died, peace everlasting!